

Jim Tomlinson and Christopher A. Whatley (eds.), *Jute No More: Transforming Dundee*. Dundee: Dundee University Press, 2011. xxvi + 326pp. 90 plates. 2 figures. 5 tables. £20.00.
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This is the final volume of the trilogy arising out of the History of Dundee Project inaugurated in 1997 with the aim of 'understanding and interpreting the town beyond Jam, Jute and Journalism'. For the record, Dundee Marmalade is now made on an industrial estate in Droylsden, the MV Banglar Urmi delivered the last bales of jute on 19 October 1998, but D.C. Thompson, the Broons and their pals are doing well.

Christopher Whatley, the project's lead, is unduly modest in asserting that few Scottish towns or cities can boast such a readable collection of books; indeed, the series marks something of a gilded age for Dundee historiography, and a significant milestone for the nascent Dundee University Press. The earlier volumes are *Dundee 1500–1800: Renaissance Burgh to Enlightenment Town* (2009) and *Victorian Dundee: Image and Reality* (2000; 2nd edn 2011). This volume explores the impact of de-industrialization on a conurbation and its community. It is effective on a broad range of issues, and will no doubt become important reading. It also addresses a number of quite distinct audiences, not least the Dundonians themselves and those who make the decisions for them. There were many to be made, for as early as jute's mid-Victorian heyday many locals felt a strong sense of their town's perceived inferiority. As their queen had it, 'The situation is fine, the town not so.' The drive to do better, whilst deploring the existing fabric of their town, has given impetus to grandiose urban development plans ever since. Indeed, the need to modify this negative aspect of the local attitude has been central to the project.

The editors have eschewed the narrative approach and opted for a double-track structure exploring 'Key themes' and 'Key episodes'. There is naturally a good degree of overlap and they have done well to keep control, but with strategically placed explorations of wider themes by Tomlinson and Whatley, and powerful contributions from Gordon Stewart ('Endgame for jute') and Charles McKean ('Beautifying and improving the city'), they do so with something to spare. The major emphasis is on economic development within the context of the shifting sands of globalization and government spending. Like Lancashire cotton, the decline of export-led jute was actually quite slow, interrupted by wartime booms, and by no means constant. As late as 1966, it was still the largest employer. The importance of the 1945 Distribution of Industry Act is identified by a number of contributors as a facilitator of significant industrial change, and studies of the role of women (Valerie Wright) and the labour problems at Timex (Bill Knox and Alan McKinlay) make significant contributions here. American investment brought the enormous Timex and NCR plants and for much of the 1960s and 1970s something approaching full employment, only for the wheel to turn again during the Thatcher years.

The urban fabric, and how Dundonians have (generally mis)managed it, comes to the fore in the contributions by Charles McKean and Jim Phillips. Though architectural visionary Patrick Geddes was Professor of Botany at University College, his famous injunction to planners to understand a town's history and geography was often ignored and the city frittered away its continental-class

estuarine location. When the council was alerted that William Adam's wonderful – if decrepit – Town House of 1733 might be protected by HM Office of Works ahead of its bicentenary, the demolition men's scaffolding was up within a week. No surprise then that Dundee is unique among the large Scottish towns in being without a single National Trust for Scotland property. The Tay Road Bridge became central to the continuing Elizabethan Renaissance, and Jim Phillips' account of the episode makes salutary reading (too cheap, too central, too local). But the Dundonians did get many things right: over 8,000 council homes were built between the wars, and housing and industrial estates were unravelled safely along the Kingsway bypass. In the end, as this superb book shows, Dundee has proved to be quite adept at transforming itself. So farewell 'Jam, Jute and Journalism', farewell Timex and NCR. Enter the V&A-on-Tay, Britain's new Northern Cultural Capital.

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Geneviève Massard-Guilbaud and Richard Rodger (eds.), *Environmental and Social Justice in the City: Historical Perspectives*. Cambridge: White Horse Press, 2011. 302pp. £65.00.
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In his greatest work, *Capital*, Karl Marx informs his readers that the metabolic relationship between the human and nature, embodied in the processes of production, is a historical universal. The forms that production takes may change, but that human societies must evolve particular productive relations to the rest of the natural world is an absolute necessity. This realization is the fundamental basis of historical materialist theory, and it founds the possibility of the historical analysis of human society. It is curious that Marx's claim fails to receive more attention from environmental historians given that their fundamental object of study is precisely the relationship between social relations and the production (and consumption) of nature. *Environmental and Social Justice in the City* is perhaps indicative of the quandary in which environmental history often finds itself with regard to social theory: it is a volume that is fundamentally unsure of its direction, a fact already indicated in the way in which the title hedges its bets. Are we concerned here with environmental justice as a fundamentally new perspective on urban struggles? Or are we looking at social justice as affected by the contingent shape of the relation to nature? At the heart of these questions is whether an urban environmental history really has anything new to offer to urban history as a whole, and, if so, what that might be.

Five themes structure this collection of essays: the construction of environmental injustices; the management of risk; water and inequality; waste and inequality; and industry and the factory as environment. Each theme is addressed by skilled and dense treatments in a range of regional and empirical studies that will be of particular interest to scholars of their respective period and to those teaching environmental history and in search of useful and accessible case-studies. Some of the essays that particularly stand out are Joanna Dean's remarkable synthesis of the concept of the social production of nature with a detailed spatial